

Appl. No. 10/802,334
Amdt. Dated January 28, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 23, 2004

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A patient registration kiosk system that allows patients to self-register for an appointment with a healthcare provider, comprising:

a patient identification mechanism ~~adapted to~~for uniquely identifying a patient so that information relevant to that patient can be retrieved from a database;

a user interface that presents the retrieved information to the patient and allows the patient to update the information as necessary, thereby maintaining current patient information in the database;

an insurance plan identification mechanism ~~adapted to~~for identifying insurance plan information including a payor associated with the patient, thereby maintaining current insurance information in the database;

~~an data-eligibility confirmation interface that enables the healthcare provider to for~~
forming an electronic communication link with-between the payor and the healthcare provider, wherein the payor responds to eligibility confirmation requests sent by the healthcare provider and the healthcare provider to confirms the patient's eligibility for coverage by the payor, prior to the appointment, based on the identified insurance plan information, over the electronic communication link; and

an insurance card scanner adapted to generate an image of each side of an insurance card associated with the patient for storage in the database.

2. (Currently Amended) The kiosk system of claim 1 further comprising:

an output device ~~adapted to provide~~for providing a receipt relevant to the patient's appointment, the receipt including at least one of ~~patient name, unique patient identifier, insurance payor name, plan name or type, patient insurance member number, eligibility confirmation, eligibility for coverage by the payor and an office co-pay amount confirmed by the payor.~~

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3. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the patient identification mechanism includes one of a barcode scanner and a card reader.
4. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the user interface includes a touch screen graphical user interface that allows the patient to interact with the kiosk system.
5. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the insurance plan identification mechanism includes one of a barcode scanner and a card reader.
6. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the data-eligibility confirmation interface forms part of an electronic data interchange (EDI) between the healthcare provider and the payor.
7. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 1 further comprising:
a processor in communication with one or more of the patient identification mechanism, the user interface, the insurance plan identification mechanism, the data-eligibility confirmation interface, and the insurance card scanner, wherein the processor is configured for controlling functionality of the kiosk system.
8. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes at least one of a front desk workstation and a billing workstation, with each workstation having access to the database.
9. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes a server that communicatively couples the database to the kiosk system.
10. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 9 wherein the server communicatively couples the database and the kiosk system to a billing system associated with the healthcare provider.
11. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 10 wherein the data-eligibility confirmation interface operates in conjunction with the server and the billing system to form the

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electronic communication link between the healthcare provider and the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage.

12. (Currently Amended) A patient registration kiosk system that allows patients to self-register for an appointment with a healthcare provider, comprising:

- a barcode scanner ~~adapted to~~ for uniquely identifying a patient so that information relevant to that patient can be retrieved from a database;

- a user interface that presents the retrieved information to the patient and allows the patient to update the information as necessary, thereby maintaining current patient information in the database;

- a card reader ~~adapted to~~ for identifying insurance plan information including a payor associated with the patient, thereby maintaining current insurance information in the database;

- an data-eligibility confirmation interface that allows for forming an electronic communication link between the payor and the healthcare provider, wherein the payor responds to eligibility confirmation requests sent by the healthcare provider and the health care provider to confirms the patient's eligibility for coverage by the payor, prior to the appointment, based on the identified insurance plan information, over the electronic communication link;

- ~~an insurance card scanner adapted to generate~~ for generating an image of each side of an insurance card associated with the patient for storage in the database; and

- ~~an output device adapted to provide for providing~~ a paper receipt relevant to the patient's appointment, the receipt including at least one of patient name, unique patient identifier, insurance payor name, plan name or type, patient insurance member number, eligibility confirmation, and office co-pay amount.

13. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 12 wherein the user interface includes a touch screen graphical user interface.

14. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 12 further comprising:

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a processor in communication with one or more of the barcode scanner, the user interface, the card reader, the data-eligibility confirmation interface, and the insurance card scanner, wherein the processor is configured for controlling functionality of the kiosk system.

15. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 12 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes at least one of a front desk workstation and a billing workstation, with each workstation having access to the database.

16. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 12 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes a server that communicatively couples the database, the kiosk system, and a billing system associated with the healthcare provider, wherein the data-eligibility confirmation interface operates in conjunction with the server and the billing system to form a the communication link between the healthcare provider and the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage.

17. (Currently amended) A patient registration kiosk system that allows patients to self-register for an appointment with a healthcare provider, comprising:

a patient identification mechanism ~~adapted to~~ for uniquely identifying a patient so that information relevant to that patient can be retrieved from a database;

a user interface that presents the retrieved information to the patient and allows the patient to update the information as necessary, thereby maintaining current patient information in the database;

an insurance plan identification mechanism ~~adapted to~~ for identifying insurance plan information including a payor associated with the patient, thereby maintaining current insurance information in the database; and

an data-eligibility confirmation interface ~~that allows for forming an electronic communication link between the payor and the healthcare provider, wherein the payor responds to eligibility confirmation requests sent by the healthcare provider and the healthcare provider to confirms~~ the patient's eligibility for coverage by the

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payor, prior to the appointment, based on the identified insurance plan information, over the electronic communication link.

18. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes a server that communicatively couples the database to the kiosk system.

19. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 18 wherein the server has electronic access to current payor provider manuals.

20. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 18 wherein the server has electronic access to sample insurance card images associated with one or more payors.

21. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein at least one of a network and a server communicatively couple the database and the kiosk system to a billing system associated with the healthcare provider.

22. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 21 wherein the data-eligibility confirmation interface operates in conjunction with the server and the billing system to establish electronic communication between the healthcare provider and the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage.

23. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes at least one of a front desk workstation and a billing workstation, with each workstation having access to the database.

24. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 23 wherein each workstation has electronic access to current versions of payor provider manuals and sample insurance card images.

25. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 23 wherein at least one of the workstations is adapted to provide a split-screen display that allows a staff member of the healthcare provider to compare images of an insurance card associated with the patient with sample insurance card images provided by the payor.

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26. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 further comprising a payment-intake mechanism configured to receive payment including at least one of a co-pay and an outstanding balance associated with the patient.

27. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the data-eligibility confirmation interface further allows the healthcare provider to confirm a co-pay associated with the patient.

28. (Currently amended) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the data-eligibility confirmation interface further allows the healthcare provider to confirm particular plan benefits associated with the patient.

29. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the identified insurance plan information further includes a specific plan associated with the patient.